Castlemaine Naturalist

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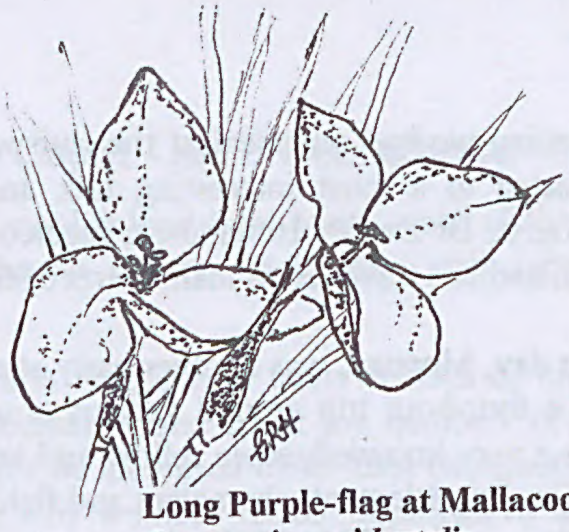

Long Purple-flag at Mallacoota
Patersonia occidentalis

SEANA Campout, Mallacoota, October 14-18 - Rita Mills

The two-day trip, via the mountains, not the city, was well worth it.
Our time was full of interest, from birding at Gypsy Point, surrounded for much of the walk by the sound of Bell Miners, watching White-bellied Sea Eagles and Caspian Terns fishing, or tiny brown birds hunting insects near a log - never did find out what they were - to walking down the cleared power-line track off miners track surrounded by a sea of blue Patersonias, the Native Flag, and finding orchids, boronias, fascinating sedges and a dainty little pea, which I finally found was the Leafless Globe-pea, hidden among them - and that was only the first day. The bird list I made for the morning at Gypsy Point came to 42, but I suspect some of the others had a more impressive list than that!

Our second morning was spent in the Old Coast Road- shipwreck Creek area. We walked through coastal forest, which was predominantly Bloodwoods, and out onto coastal heathlands. There were lots of different peas, including a taller form of the Handsome Flat-pea, which we find here as an almost prostrate plant, and a pale flowered Gompholobium.

I didn't see a lot of birds, but a Yellow Robin and Grey Fantails were soon seen as we started down the track. As we didn't have a local guide our leader from the Sale Club dubbed it a discovery walk, and we soon strung out along the length of the track, from those who didn't go far from the cars because they were birding and finding orchids near there, to those of us who walked right down to the heathland, going from a forest where there was little understorey, other than scattered herbs and orchids and ferns, to a crowded "understorey" and only a few clumps of Melaleucas, Callistemons and stunted Eucalypts.

We had a free afternoon, and as we'd taken lunch with us, we returned, after dropping our passenger off, to a hidden picnic area on the Betka River, and had picnic lunch accompanied by Silvereyes, honeyeaters and Whipbirds.

That evening we had our meal at the club with the rest of the group, and later were treated to a most interesting talk and slide presentation by an expert ornithologist, Dr David Hollands, a medico from Orbost, who is a mad keen Owl man and has travelled to many parts of the world photographing owls.

The next day, Monday, was another early start as we joined the little M.V. Loch Ard for a four-hour trip around various arms of the Mallacoota Inlet. Captain Bob was a very knowledgeable fellow and kept up a commentary on the history of the area, its settlement, characters and fishing history (by the way, an abalone licence that cost just $2 in 1960 will cost you $7 million today!).

As we left the Jetty Bob pointed out the small colony of pelicans on the little island opposite, telling us that they were the geriatrics which were no longer breeding, and were now looking to be fed when any fishing boats came in and cleaned their catch. Later in the morning we could see the other part of the colony, along with hundreds of Black Swans, many with cygnets, out on the Goodwin Sands.

As we motored gently along we wound in and out of bays, and I could well understand that fishermen every so often have to make radio or mobile phone contact to find out how to get back to Mallacoota! When we were in the Twin Creeks area we found ourselves among hundreds of jellyfish which come into the inlet to breed, and leave again once they are about twenty centimetres across. Once when the sandbar blocked the outlet to the sea there were some huge ones trapped in the lakes system.

We landed on one of the small jetties where we were given morning tea and a chance to stretch our legs before heading back, but not before going across the arm to inspect Fairhaven, one of the oldest properties on the lakes. We were back by 11.30am. If we had been much longer the wind would have got up, and the inlet, being very shallow, can suddenly whip up short steep waves, which are not very pleasant to be caught out in, though there are places where boats can go in to shelter.

Our afternoon was spent doing the Pittosporum walk from the park in the town, through littoral forest and down onto the beach to Bastion Point. A number of Bar-tailed Godwits and Pied Oystercatchers were among the birds seen on that walk.

On Tuesday Doug and I decided not to join the group going to Marlo as we would be heading home that way the next day. Instead drove up to Eden to have a look around, and found ourselves up at the lookout - and three Humpback Whales were in the bay, so that was a thrill for us both.

BOCA Bird Challenge Count - Sat 3 December.

Who can take part? Anyone can. We need at least three teams, each of three or four people. You do not need to be an expert. Each team will have an experienced leader to help.

What is the aim of the count? The aim is to see as many species of bird as possible within a 40km radius of Castlemaine, and count the numbers of each species. For a bird to be counted, it must be identified by at least two people by sight, or thee people by sound. That is why we need teams. Sightings by a sole observer cannot be counted.

Meet at the Old Tourist Information Centre opposite the Castle Motel at 8.15am for an 8.30am start.

How long will it take? We usually have all-day teams and half-day teams. All day people take snacks and lunch. Half-day people bring morning or afternoon tea. All bring binoculars. Return to the Old Information Centre by 5.30pm. For half-day trips, lunch is between 12.15pm and 1.00 pm.

Other years. CFNC has been taking part for many years. We do much the same area each year, so the bird count can be compared year by year, and we get a picture of whether bird numbers are increasing or not. It is a very enjoyable day. It does not require high speed travelling – it is hard to see birds at high speed. Because many other groups are taking part, bird numbers can be compared across the nation.

How to register. Please give me your name by Wed 30 November, so that teams can be arranged.

Ern Perkins 5472 3124

Birds recorded at Chinamans Point - 16 October 2005.

Members of Castlemaine Field Naturalists Club and Ringwood Field Naturalists Club.

Little Eagle	Crimson Rosella	Eastern Rosella
Sulphur-crested Cockatoo	Kookaburra	Common Bronzewing
Pallid Cuckoo	Shining Bronze-cuckoo	Horsfields Bronze-cuckoo
Grey Fantail	Willie Wagtail	Eastern Yellow Robin
Rufous Whistler	Grey Shrike-thrush	Crested Bellbird
Oriole	Superb Fairy-wren	Striated Thornbill
Brown Thornbill	White-naped Honeyeater	Yellow-faced Honeyeater
Yellow-tufted Honeyeater	Fuscous Honeyeater	New Holland Honeyeater
Silvereye	Spotted Pardalote	Red-Browed Firetail
Goldfinch	Magpie	

Screen Saver Project -Wildflowers of the Castlemaine Forests.

On my computer, I have WA wildflowers as my screen saver. If the computer is idle for 3 minutes, wildflowers photographs are shown on my screen. Each 6 seconds, another photograph is shown, and the computer cycles through the collection of photos in a random sequence.

The Castlemaine FNC will soon be 30 years of age. As a 30th anniversary project, it is proposed to produce a Castlemaine Wildflowers Screen Saver. We can aim to have as many kinds of local wildflowers as possible. When photographs are received, they will be scanned, and a caption with name of the plant and photographer will be added.

As it is a 30th year project for the club, it would be good to have as many members as possible contribute. Please look at your collection. Do you have slides, prints or digital images of local plants. If so, please lend it to me so that it can be scanned. The aim is to have the project finished by the end of February, so we will need to start promptly.

Ern Perkins

Wednesday Evening Wildflower Walks

Walk (1)Margaret Dunn's Property, Sinclair Lane, 14/9/05.

(Leader: Dorothy Wright)

We were fortunate to have this opportunity to visit Margaret's property as she has now moved away from the area. Unfortunately it was a little early in the season but we did find the following things in flower:

Billy Buttons (*Craspedia sp.)* Common Early Nancy (*Wurmbea dioica)*
Common Hovea (*Hovea heterophylla)* Dusky Fingers (*Caladenia fuscata)*
Dwarf Greenhood (*Pterostylis nana)* Gold Dust Wattle (*Acacia acinacea)*
Golden Moths (Diuris chryseopsis) Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*)
Gorse Bitter-pea (*Daviesia ulicifolia*) Hedge Wattle (*Acacia paradoxa*)
Honey-pots (*Acrotriche serrulata)* Leopard Orchid (Diuris pardina)
Slender Rice-flower (*Pimelea linifolia)* Spiky Guinea-fl. (*Hibbertia exutiacies)*
Sticky Everlast'g (*Xerochrysum viscosum)*Tiny Star (*Hypoxis glabella*)
Yam Daisy (*Microseris sp.)*

Geraldine Harris

Walk (2) Boronia Gully, 21/9/05. (Leader: George Broadway)

On the excurson to the Boronia patch there was a paucity of things in flower. Those seen were:

Bushy Parrot-pea (*Dillwynia ramosissima*) Dusky Fingers (*Caladenia fuscata*)
Gold-dust Wattle (*Acacia. acinacea)* Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*)
Hedge Wattle (*Acacia paradoxa)*
Sticky Boronia (*Boronia anemonifolia ssp anemonifolia)*
White Marianth (*Rhytidosporum procumbens)*
A pretty poor effort for spring.

Ern Perkins

Walk (3). Peelers Rd., Barkers Creek, 28/9/05. (Leader: Rita Mills)
A wet morning wasn't promising for the afternoon walk, and only three of us, Frances Cincotta, her sister from Melbourne and myself turned up. We decided to go anyway, and I soon found my doubts were allayed, as the few Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*) and Dusky Fingers (*Caladenia fuscata*) I'd found on Saturday were by Wednesday in their scores, and the odd Leopard Orchid were dozens by then - mind you, they were only only about 15 cm high again this year. The Beard Heath had started to flower in the meantime, and best of all, we found the one plant that has pink flowers. As far as I know these are the only plants of Beard Heath on the north side of the town.
Plants for the afternoon were:
Hedge, Rough, Ploughshare, Golden and Gold-dust Wattle (*Acacia paradoxa, A. aspera, A. gunnii, A. pycnantha and A. acinacea*), Slender Rice-flower (*Pimelea linifolia*), Fairy Wax (*Philotheca verrucosa*), Purple-leaf Groundsel (*Senecio tenuiflorus*), Pink Bells (*Tetratheca cilliata*), Waxlip Orchid (including one pure white one) (Glossodia major), and Leopard Orchid (*Diurus pardina),* Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea),* Dusky Fingers (*C. fuscata),* White Marianth *(Rhytidosporum procumbens*), Common Woodrush (Luzula meridionalis), Downy Grevillea (*G. alpina*), Early Nancy (Wurmbea dioica), Yam Daisy (Microseris sp.), Common Beard Heath (*Leucopogon virgata*), including a specimen with pink flowers, Common Wedge Pea (*Gompholobium huegelii*) and Grey Everlasting (*Ozothamnus obcordatus*)were in bud.

Rita Mills

Walk (4) The Monk, 5/10/05. (Leader: Richard Piesse)
This walk was to start at the Monk and then Richard planned to move on to another area but as the group kept on discovering new flowering plants we spent the whole of our time at the Monk. Flowers listed were -
Black's Goodenia (*Goodenia blackiana),* Brown-clubbed Spider Orchid (*Caladenia phaeoclavia*), Buttercup (*Ranuculus sp*), Buttons (*Craspedia sp*), Chocolate Lily (*Arthropodium strictum*), Common Wood-rush (*Luzula meridionalis*), Creamy Candles (*Stackhousia monogyna*), Downy Grevillea (*Grevillea alpina*), Dusky Caladenia (*Caladenia fuscata*) , Early Nancy (*Wurmbea dioica*), Flannel Cudweed (*Actinobole uliginosum*), Gold-dust Wattle (*Acacia acinacea*), Gorse Bitter-pea (*Daviesia ulicifolia*), Grey Everlasting (*Ozothamus obcordatus*), Handsome Flat-pea (*Platylobium formosum*), Hedge Wattle (*Acacia paradoxa*), Leopard Orchid (*Diuris pardina*), Pink Bells (*Tetratheca ciliata*), Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*), Red Spider Orchid (*Caladenia concolor*), Rock Fern (*Cheilanthes sp.*), Slender Grounsel (*Senecio phelleus*) , Slender Rice-flower (*Pimilea linifolia*), Soft Millotia (*Millotia tenuifolia*), Sticky Everlasting (*Xerochrysum viscosum*), Tall *Sundew (Drosera peltata ssp auriculata*), Waxlip Orchid (*Glossodia major*), White Marianth, *(Rhytidosporum procumbens*), Yam Daisy (*Microseris sp.*) Geraldine Harris

Walk (5). Quartz Hill Track, 12/10/05.(Leader: Michael Kennedy) Michael and Carla generously offered to have a walk on their 30 acre, Land for Wildlife property. The front of the block is quite weedy but as we moved deeper onto the property to beautiful rocky outcrops and along a very pretty sandstone-lined dry waterway we discovered more and more interesting plants. In true FN fashion we ran out of time before we reached the "more interesting" part of the property but everyone enjoyed the opportunity to visit a new area and expressed interest in a longer visit another time.

Because this was a new area we included plants that were not flowering (nf). Austral Indigo (*Indigofera australis*), Bedstraw (*Galium sp.)*, Blanket Fern (*Pleurosorus rutifolius*), Blue Pincushion (*Brunonia australis nf*) Buttons (Craspedia sp.), Chocolate Lily (Arthropdium strictum nf), Common Hovea (Hovea heterophylla nf), Common Wood-rush (Lazula meridionalis), Cranberry Heath (Astroloma humifusum nf), Daphne Heath (Brachyloma daphnoides nf), Early Black wattle (Acacia decurrens), Early Nancy (Wurmbea dioica), Golden wattle (*Acacia pycnantha nf)*, Greencomb Spider-orchid (Caladenia sp.), Grey Everlasting (*Ozothamus obcordatus*) nf Hedge wattle (Aciacia paradoxa), Majenta Stork's-bill (Pelergonium rodneyanum nf), Musky Hood (Caladenia gracillis), Necklace fern (Asplenium flabellifolium), Pink Fingers (*Caladenia carnea*), Rock Fern (*Cheilanthes sp.*) Rough wattle (*Acacia aspera)*, Scaly Buttons (*Leptorynchus squamatus*), Scented Sundew (*Drosera whitakeri ssp aberrans nf*), Showy Podolepis (*Podolepis jaceoides*), Slender Rice-flower (*Pimelia linifolia*), Slender Sun-orchid (*Thelemitra pauciflora*), Spurred Velleia (*Vellia paradoxa nf*), Sticky Everlasting (*Xerochrysum viscosum*), Sweet Bursaria (*Bursaria spinosa ssp spinosa*), Tall Sundew (*Drosera peltata ssp auriculata nf*), Waxlip Orchid (*Glossodia major*), Yam Daisy (*Microseris sp.*)

Geraldine Harris

New additions to the Castlemaine Plant List

On a community walk along the Jim Crow Creek at Yandoit, we saw a few treasures not yet recorded in Castlemaine Plant List for that area:

Acacia melanoxylon (Blackwood), Callistemon sieberi (River Bottlebrush), Chrysocephalum apiculatum (Common Everlasting Daisy), Correa glabra (Rock Correa), Einadia nutans (Nodding Salt Bush), Glycine tabacina (Variable Glycine), Dodonaea viscosa ssp. spatulata (Hop Bush) and Velleia paradoxa (Spur Velleia).

Also, on a walk on Mt Tarrengower (as part of Maldon Folk Festival) the delightfully scented Cynoglossum suaveolens (Sweet Hound's-tongue) was flowering.

Frances Cincotta

Wrong Postcode: Ken and Maureen - Moving North. In last months newsletter we printed the wrong postcode. The Dredge's new address should have read P O Box 337, BARHAM, NSW 2732.

Observations

- 14/10 Natalie de Maccus (Weynton Rd) had over 100 **Waxlip Orchids** flowering on a 4 - 5m patch. Previously local wallabies have eaten them.
- 16/10 **Painted Honeyeater** at Vaughan Springs and a pair of **White-fronted Chats** of the Yapeen Muckleford Road. Margaret Badminton.
- 16/10 Visiting Ringwood Group sighted a **Crested Bellbird** at Chinaman's Point.
- 26/10 A healthy-looking large female **koala** sighted in a tree along Hagues Road, Barkers Creek. Geraldine Harris
- A **frog** has taken up residence in the Perkins Garden. Ern Perkins
- A **Darter** has been sighted on Lake Joanna in the Castlemaine Botanic Gardens. George Broadway
- A family of nine **Wood Ducks and Welcome Swallows** also seen in the Gardens. Richard Piesse
- 1/11 Two small brown **Superb Fairy Wrens** noticed on the ground lying on their sides engaged in some sort of battle. A large male in full spring plumage hopped about them and on two occasions flew and sat for an instant on the fighting birds but with no affect. As I approached they flew away. Geraldine Harris
- 1/11 Three **geckoes** around our back door in the evening feasting on millipedes – you could see the shadow of the consumed millipedes inside their bodies. Geraldine Harris

From the Business Meeting 27/10/05

- Ern and Lesley to attend a presentation of an Australian Natural History Medallion to Pauline Reilly (Guest Speaker Oct 2004) on 14/10/05.
- CFNC to put a panel in the Heritage Festival Exhibition, "Infrastructure - Roads, Bridges and Railway Buildings", (May 2006), relating to "Roadsides and Nature".
- MAS seeking comment on suggested species (Allocasuarina verticillata and Angophora costata) to replace trees in Duke St. Ern to reply.
- Offer by Peter Johnson DSE apply for funds to clear weeds in Castlemaine Botanic Gardens using Conservation Volunteers Australia accepted.
- Decision not to "withdraw if satisfied" on receiving photos and revised list for removal of trees from Pyrenees – to maintain input into final outcome.
- **CDNHP Eureka Reef Survey** – CFNC to undertake survey to compile plant list and photos for Eureka Reef to assist in application for funds ($3000). An initial survey on Tuesday Nov 1 yielded a list of 127 plants. **Next survey outing Fri Nov 11. Depart from opp. motel in Duke St. at 8am.** Members encouraged to assist - bring cameras.
- Police and Parks Vic. Letter of support to purchase suitable bike to assist in apprehension of trail bike offenders in parks.

Castlemaine Field Naturalists Programme – November 2005

General meetings (second Friday of each month, except January) are held in the Uniting Church (UCA) Hall (enter from Lyttleton St.) at 8.00 pm.
Excursions (Saturday following the general meeting) leave from the carpark opposite Castle Motel, Duke Street at 1.30pm sharp unless stated otherwise. BYO morning and afternoon tea. Outdoor excursions are likely to be cancelled in extreme weather conditions. There are NO excursions on total fire ban days.
Business meetings - fourth Thursday of each month, except December, at 27 Doveton Street, at 7.30 pm. All members are invited to attend.
VISITORS ARE WELCOME AT CLUB MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS.

Fri Nov 11. Eureka Reef Survey. (See Business Notes p.7) Depart from opp. motel in Duke St. at 8am. Members encouraged to assist - bring cameras.
Fri 11 Nov. Walking the Flinders Ranges. John Lindner. UCA hall at 8pm.
Sat 12 Nov. Wewak Track/ Porcupine Ridge. Richard Piesse 54723191. Depart from carpark opposite the motel in Duke St. at 1.30pm sharp.
Sat 19 Nov. Roadside Cleanup. Meet near Tait's Decorative Iron, Pyrenees Highway, Castlemaine at 8.30am. Gloves, garbage bags and red safety vests supplied. Wear sturdy footwear. Contact Hans van Germert. Ph 5472 1082.
Sat 3 Dec. Annual Bird Challenge Count. Depart opp. motel in Duke St at 8am sharp. (Register by Nov 30) Leader: Ern Perkins Ph 54723124.
Fri 9 Dec. Members and Visitors Night. Traditional "Show and Tell" night where members provide short presentations on favourite places, subjects, book reviews etc. Be as creative as you like. Bring a plate of supper to share. UCA hall at 8pm.
Sat 10 Dec. Christmas Excursion - Blackwood. (Details to be decided)
2006
Jan. Dawn Breakfast (BYO - time and place to be decided)
Jan. Excursion with Ringwood Club to Mount Pilot (Broadford, Kilmore area). (Date to be decided)
Fri Feb 10. AGM. Talk by Rita Mills – 2nd President of CFNC – 1978/9.

2005 Committee

Rita Mills (Pres).....Ph. 5472 4553	George Broadway (Sec)....Ph. 5472 2513
Hans van Gemert (Treas).Ph. 5472 1082	Richard Piesse.....Ph.5472 3191
Ern Perkins (Web).....Ph. 5472 3124	Athol Dorman.....Ph. 5472 4429
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